

**SPECIAL CALL CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2020 5:10 P.M.
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VERO BEACH, FLORIDA**

PRESENT: Mayor Tony Young, present; Vice Mayor Laura Moss, present; Councilmember Robbie Brackett, present; Councilmember Joe Graves, present and Councilmember Rey Neville, present **Also Present:** Monte Falls, City Manager; John Turner, City Attorney and Tammy Bursick, City Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER

A) Roll Call

Mayor Young opened the meeting at 5:10 p.m. and the City Clerk performed the roll call.

2. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A) An Ordinance of the City of Vero Beach, Florida, Providing for the Levy of Ad Valorem Taxes for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 at a Millage Rate of 2.5000 which equates to \$2.5000 per \$1,000 of Assessed Property Value.

The City Clerk read the Ordinance by title only.

Ms. Cindy Lawson, Finance Director, commented that at the first public hearing for the budget that was held on September 9, 2020, the proposed final budget is balanced in the City's General Fund at a millage rate of 2.5000, which is 2.95% greater than the rolled-back millage rate of 2.4284 mills. The millage rate generates ad valorem tax revenue that is \$246K higher than last years tax levy. In this tentative budget, the increased tax revenue has been used to offset a decrease in the amount of residual cash from the electric sale proceeds used to balance the General Fund budget and to fund increases in personnel costs, which include salaries and health insurance.

Mr. Brackett asked Ms. Lawson if they ended up with \$80,000 in surplus. Ms. Lawson said that it was \$89,000.

Mayor Young opened the public hearing at 5:13 p.m.

Mr. Brian Heady said for several years he has been singing the same song and that is that City Council needs to have the millage rate reflect their expenses. If the anticipated income is less than what is going out then there is going to be a downfall. They either need to decide to cut the budget or have a millage rate that supports their expenses and this budget does not do that without borrowing money. He heard "double speak" at the last meeting, but the bottom line is in this budget there are more expenses than what is anticipated in income. It also does not include the decline that they will see because of COVID-19. He pointed out that the City of Vero Beach's millage rate is much lower than comparable cities.

Mayor Young asked Ms. Lawson if in regards to their millage rate were they comparable to other relative cities.

Ms. Lawson commented that their millage rate is one (1) of lowest rates in the State of Florida and they are very conservative.

Mayor Young closed the public hearing at 5:17 p.m., with no one else wishing to be heard.

Mr. Neville made a motion to adopt the Ordinance. Mr. Brackett seconded the motion.

The City Clerk read for the record Section I and Section II that is included in the Ordinance.

On a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0 with Mr. Neville voting yes, Mr. Graves yes, Mr. Brackett yes, Vice Mayor Moss yes, and Mayor Young yes.

- B) An Ordinance of the City of Vero Beach, Florida, Adopting the Annual Budget of the City for the Fiscal Year beginning October 1, 2020 and Ending September 30, 2021; Appropriating funds for the Operating Expenses, Supplies, and Personnel, and otherwise appropriating funds for the Efficient and Effective Operation of the Government of the City of Vero Beach and its Departments; Such appropriations being from anticipated revenue; providing a means to amend the Annual Budget to carry forward the funding of Purchase Orders, Work Orders, and Grants outstanding as of September 30, 2020; Providing a means to amend the Annual Budget to reflect Grants received after September 30, 2020; and authorizing the Transfer of Funds Appropriated so long as the total combined appropriations shall not be increased there by; Providing an Effective Date.**

The City Clerk read the Ordinance by title only.

Ms. Lawson stated that at the September 9, 2020 budget public hearing, Council adopted a transfer of \$300,000 in code enforcement fine revenue from the General Fund (Fund 001) to the General Government Capital and Construction fund (Fund 304) in FY 19-20 to support planned improvements to the Police Department Pistol Range in FY 20-21. In addition, the cost of the Pistol Range Improvement project was increased from \$300,000 to \$400,000 in FY 20-21. As a result of these changes (an additional \$300K in revenue offset by an additional \$100K in costs) the ending FY 20-21 fund balance in General Government Capital and Construction increased by \$200K; and these funds are available for appropriation by budget amendment should additional capital project needs arise in FY 20-21.

Mayor Young opened the public hearing at 5:21 p.m.

Mr. Brian Heady asked in the details of this budget does any Councilmember know whether there is budgeted enough funding to settle the Abbassi case that they will be discussing at the Special Call meeting that follows this meeting. He asked what is the amount of that settlement agreement and is that amount in the details of this budget.

Ms. Lawson explained that the Abbassi case is taking place in Fiscal Year 2020 (this year) and as they discussed they plan at the end of the fiscal year to move that money into Fund 304 to fund a project for next year depending on the outcomes of their discussions in the subsequent meeting. She said if it is necessary they can go back and amend the budget. She pointed out that the only thing they are doing today that they cannot do differently until next year is set the millage rate.

Mr. Heady stated that his question was do they know whether that amount is in this budget and do they know what amount that is.

Mayor Young said it was the settlement that they received from the Abbassi case.

Ms. Lawson said that the settlement was around \$400,040 in Fiscal Year 2020 and what Council voted to do was take \$300,000 of that and move it to another fund to fund a project in 2021.

Mr. Heady said so the Abbassi case that will be discussed at the next Special Call meeting (after this meeting) Council will make a determination as to whether or not to accept the settlement.

Mayor Young said that matter will be discussed at the Special Call meeting.

Mr. Heady said so in this budget they have already said what is going to happen to the money in a case that they have not even agreed to a settlement for.

Mayor Young said that they have received the escrow funds and what will be discussed at the next meeting is if they want to consider other matters related to that. They have the ability to make adjustments based upon the actions that are there.

Mayor Young closed the public hearing at 5:24 p.m., with no one else wishing to be heard.

Vice Mayor Moss made a motion to approve the Ordinance. Mr. Brackett seconded the motion and it passed 5-0 with Mr. Neville voting yes, Mr. Graves yes, Mr. Brackett yes, Vice Mayor Moss yes, and Mayor Young yes.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

4. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

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